

Vanquish the Haughty and Spare the Subjected: A Study of Bernard of Clairvaux's Position on Muslims and Jews

James Kroemer*

Department of Theology, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, USA

*E-mail: jameskroemer@gmail.com

Abstract

The Jews and the Muslims drew the attention of the twelfth Century Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, and his words and actions had consequences for both communities. Despite his many demeaning comments about Jews and Judaism, he defended Jews from Crusader attacks, and he believed that Jews would convert to Christianity prior to the end of the world. On the other hand, he promoted the Second Crusade for the purpose of defending Jerusalem from Muslim invasion. He had no interest in converting Muslims to Christianity, only killing them if they continued their threat on the Holy Land. A close examination of Bernard's writings reveals that his position on Jews and Muslims was not merely a reflection of church policy, but a means to advance his personal spiritual desire of union with God.

Keywords

Bernard of Clairvaux, crusades, eschatology, mystical theology, Christian-Jewish relations, Christian-Muslim relations

Bernard of Clairvaux laid out his position on Muslims and Jews in a crusade letter written in 1146 and sent to both the clergy and people of Eastern France and Bavaria, and to the people of England.¹ According to the Cistercian abbot, Muslims are the enemy of the cross (*crucis adversarii*),

¹ The letter to the French and Bavarians is *Epistola* 363, found in *Sancti Bernardi Opera* (hereafter referred to as SBO), eds Jean Leclercq and Henri Rochais (Rome: Editiones Cisternes, 1957-1977), VIII:311-317. The letter to the people of England is Letter 391, found in an English translation in Bernard of Clairvaux, *The Letters of St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, trans. Bruno Scott James (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1998), 460-463. The two letters are similar with a few minor differences in wording.

pagan filth (*spurcitia paganorum*), and the wicked one's vessels of injustice (*iniquitatis vasa*) because they are threatening to invade Jerusalem, the very city of the living God. If the Muslims would not threaten Jerusalem, Bernard wrote that Christians would be advised to leave them alone. But since they have begun to attack, they are to be repelled by the sword of Christian knights. Concerning the Jews, Bernard affirmed the traditional Church position that they are guilty of the crime of rejecting Christ, they deserve to be dispersed around the world, and they must bear up under a hard captivity under Christian princes. However, an additional purpose of this letter was to put an end to violence against Jews being stirred up among crusaders by a wayward Cistercian monk named Radulf. Bernard ordered that Jews were not to be persecuted, killed or put to flight because Scripture states, "not for their destruction do I pray." He then insisted that when the time is ripe, the Jews will be converted to Christianity. At the end of the letter Bernard summed up his position on Muslims and Jews by writing, "Indeed it is Christian piety to vanquish the haughty and spare the subjected."²

Bernard's summons to vanquish the haughty Muslims and spare the subjected Jews revealed a great deal about the twelfth century relationship between the Catholic Church and Muslims, and the Catholic Church and Jews. Yes, there were those like Peter the Venerable who desired to enter into theological discussions with Muslims for the purpose of converting them to Christianity.³ Yes, there were those like Hugh of St. Victor who sought out Jewish rabbis in order to consult them about their exegetical traditions.⁴ But Bernard's crusade letter shows us that the Church called for military action against Muslims to keep them from Jerusalem, and the Church sought to protect Jews from overzealous crusaders who wanted to avenge the crucifixion of Christ.

Bernard's thoughts about Muslims and Jews found in this crusade letter also reveal something about the Cistercian abbot himself. Bernard did not only write about vanquishing the haughty Muslims and sparing the subjected Jews, he personally recruited knights to fight the Muslims threaten-

² *Est autem christianae pietatis, ut debellare superbos, sic parcere subiectis. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:317; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 463.*

³ See James Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964).

⁴ See Rebecca Moore, *Jews and Christians in the Life and Thought of Hugh of St. Victor* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998).

ing Jerusalem, and he personally prevented these same knights from harming Jews. Was Bernard simply carrying out Church policy, or did he have other more personal concerns that moved him to write and act as he did toward Muslims and Jews? This paper will explore the abbot's position on Muslims and Jews in order to determine if his words and actions were shaped by his spiritual theology.

Bernard on Jews and Judaism

Scholars have both praised Bernard for being a friend of Jews and criticized him for reinforcing age-old Christian hostilities against Jews.⁵ David Berger produced an extensive study of Bernard's attitude toward the Jews. Berger cites numerous examples of what he calls the strongly anti-Semitic tenor found in Bernard's sermons and letters. In fact, Berger notes how Bernard "commonly used Jews as a standard of comparison for various forms of heresy and sin."⁶ Yet Berger concedes that Bernard maintained

⁵ Richard Storrs makes the case that Bernard's example and words in the protection of the German Jews at the start of the Second Crusade "distinctly affected the attitude toward the Jews from that time on, and were always a defense for persecuted people." See Richard S. Storrs, *Bernard of Clairvaux—The Times, The Man, and His Work* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 180-181. Edward H. Flannery lauds Bernard's courage in protecting the Jews saying that Bernard was of a different mind from Peter the Venerable, who wrote an angry letter to King Louis VII of France urging that the Jews be punished. See Edward H. Flannery, *The Anguish of the Jews—Twenty-three Centuries of Antisemiticism* (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1985), 94-95. J. A. Watt writes that Bernard "constructed a theological defence of Jews which he propagated widely." See J. A. Watt, "The Crusades and the Persecution of the Jews," in *The Medieval World*, ed. Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), 154. On the other hand, Robert Chazan notes that even though Bernard denounced crusader attacks on Jews, he did not challenge the imagery of Jews as historic enemies of Christianity. See Robert Chazan, *The Jews of Medieval Western Christendom: 1000-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 68. Lester Little writes that Bernard fostered the mentality that led to Christian violence against the Jews. See Lester K. Little, "The Jews in Christian Europe," in *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict—From Late Antiquity to the Reformation*, ed. Jeremy Cohen (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1991), 283-284. Christopher Tyerman adds that Bernard's general message of intolerance spilled over into anti-Jewish violence in the Rhineland at the beginning of the Second Crusade. See Christopher Tyerman, *Fighting for Christianity—Holy War and the Crusades* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 48.

⁶ David Berger, "The Attitude of St. Bernard of Clairvaux toward the Jews," *American Academy for Jewish Research* XL (1972):104. One example given by Berger is found in a letter written by Bernard to Alphonsus, Count of St. Gilles, concerning a heretic named

the most liberal of views toward Jews that were within accepted Church theology. Berger concludes that Bernard “was an unusually strong opponent of the destruction of the Jews, yet an equally strong spokesman for anti-Jewish stereotypes and prejudices.”⁷

Despite the anti-Jewish stereotypes and prejudices that Berger documents in Bernard’s writings, a close study of the abbot’s comments on the Jews indicates that he did not share the commonly held thinking that the Jews were being divinely punished because they had killed Christ.⁸ Bernard did hold the Jews culpable for their role in the crucifixion of Christ, but he understood their actions as a part of the plan of salvation. For example, in *Sermo 3, In Psalmum “Qui Habitat,”* Bernard graphically described the malice of the Jews toward Christ.

It was a cruel word, which was produced by the cruel house, the Jewish people: “Away, away, crucify him!” What a horrible word, what disdain, what cruelty, truly their teeth are weapons and arrows, and their language a sharp sword.⁹

However, instead of condemning the Jews for their cruelty, the abbot instead praises Christ for his patient suffering that brought salvation. “You bore this cruel word, Lord. Why, if not to set us free from the cruel word?”¹⁰ Another clear example of Bernard’s emphasis on Christ’s submission to the cruelty of the Jews for the purpose of salvation, rather than condemning

Henry. Among Henry’s heresies were the denial of infant baptism, the denial that the body and blood of Christ are really offered at the altar, and the assertion that prayers for the dead are ridiculous. Bernard described Henry as closing his eyes to the truth with “more than Jewish blindness” (*prorsus Iudaica caecitate*). See Letter 241, SBO VIII:126; Letter 317, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 387-388.

⁷ Berger, 107.

⁸ Gavin Langmuir writes that by the year 400, divine punishment of the Jews for killing Christ was one of the basic elements of the doctrine about the Jews and Judaism developed by individual churchmen that would endure almost until the present, although it was not set down in an official document. See Gavin I. Langmuir, “Faith of Christians and Hostility to Jews,” in *Christianity and Judaism*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), 81.

⁹ *Verbum asperum fuit, quod protulit domus exasperans, populus Iudaeorum: Tolle, tolle, crucifige eum! Quam horribile verbum, quam asperum, quam crudele! Vere dentes eorum arma et sagittae, et lingua eorum gladius acutus. Sermo 3, In Psalmum, “Qui Habitat,”* SBO IV:394; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on Conversion*, trans. Marie-Bernard Saïd (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 131.

¹⁰ *Hoc verbum asperum tu sustinuisti, Domine. Cur, nisi ut nos liberares a verbo aspero? Sermo 3, In Psalmum, “Qui Habitat,”* SBO IV:394; *Sermons on Conversion*, 131.

the Jews themselves, was found in his words addressed to Christ, the Lamb of God (*Agne Dei*), in *Sermo 2, In Nativitate*: "Expose to the Jews your hands and feet for piercing, so that the treasure of salvation and abundant redemption hid in them may go forth."¹¹

Bernard interpreted the misfortunes of the Jews not to be a result of their role in the crucifixion of Christ, but their rejection of the salvation the crucifixion brought forth in favor of clinging to their Law. He wrote in *Homilia I, In Laudibus Virginis Matris*:

If all flesh is grass, therefore, the carnal Jewish people were also grass. And did not the grass go to ruin, while the people were without all the richness of the spiritual, while cleaving to the dry letter? And was not the flower falling off, when they gloried in the law that was left behind? If the grass was not cut away, where, therefore, is the kingdom, where the priesthood, where the Prophets, where the temple, finally where are those great things of which they used to boast and say, "How great are the things we have heard and become acquainted with, which our fathers made known to us," and again, "How great the commands our fathers were to acquaint their children with?"¹²

Because the Jews rejected Christ's redemption, Bernard agreed with the Apostle Paul (Romans 2:28-29) that Christians are the true Jews (*veros alloquimur Iudaeos*), not in letter, but spirit (*non littera, sed spiritus*). Christians are the true offspring of Abraham (*semen Abraham*), whose promised multiplication God sees implemented (*cuius multiplicatio, sicut promissa legitur, sic videtur impleretur*).¹³ In *Sermo 73, Super Cantica*, Bernard cited

¹¹ *Fodiendas expone Iudaeo manus tuas et pedes, ut procedat qui in eis latet thesaurus salutis et copiosa redemptio. Sermo 2, In Nativitate*, SBO IV:255; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons for Advent and the Christmas Season*, trans. Irene Edmonds, Wendy Mary Beckett, Conrad Greenia (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2007), 111.

¹² *Si omnis caro fenum, ergo carnalis ille populus Iudaeorum fenum fuit. Annon fenum aruit, dum idem populus ab omni spiritus pinguedine vacuus, siccae litterae adhaesit? Annon etiam flos decidit, quando gloriatio quam habebant in lege, remansit? Si flos non decidit, ubi ergo regnum, ubi sacerdotium, ubi Prophetiae, ubi templum, ubi denique magnalia illa, de quibus gloriari solebant et dicere: "Quanta audivimus et cognovimus ea, et patres nostri narrantur nobis," et iterum: "Quanta mandavit patribus nostris nota facere ea filiis suis?" Homilia I, In Laudibus Virginis Matris*, SBO IV:17; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Homilies In Praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, trans. Marie-Bernard Saïd (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1993), 8-9.

¹³ *Sermo 1, Dominica Prima Post Octavam Epiphaniae*, SBO IV:315-316; Bernard of Clairvaux, "On the Chant: O Judah and Jerusalem," in *Sermons for Advent and the Christmas Season*, trans. Irene Edmonds, Wendy Marie Beckett and Conrad Greenia (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2007), 50.

Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:25-32), comparing the Jews to the elder brother who chose to labor under the heavy yoke of the Law, refusing to enter the house of feasting even when invited by the father. "And this is to show the distinction between the direction of the Church and the direction of the Synagogue, to make clear the blindness of the one from the prudence of the other, and that the happiness of the one goes before the wretched destiny of the other."¹⁴

In *Sermo 60, Super Cantica*. Bernard described the common people of the Jews (*plebs Iudaeorum*) as the unripe figs spoken of in Song of Songs 20:13 (*Ficus protulit grossos suos*).¹⁵ Judaism was brought forth from virtuous patriarchal roots (*quae bona licet Patriarcharum radice prodierit*). Bernard wrote that the root was holy (*Radix enim sancta*). "What is in it is of the Holy Spirit, wholly of fine texture and sweet."¹⁶ Why then is Judaism and why are the Jews like unripe figs? Bernard explained: "But now their actions are hostile, their passions were totally in love of gain, their understanding in dense literalism, their worship with the blood of cattle and herds... With their killing of Christ, their malice became complete."¹⁷ Bernard described the Jews as having the disposition of vipers because of "their hatred of the man who heals the bodies of men and saves their souls."¹⁸

Bernard continued *Sermo 60* by asserting that the Jews are like cows (*bovinum*) because they did not recognize God even in God's works (*qui*

¹⁴ *Et haec dicta sint pro distinctione partis Ecclesiae partisque Synagogae, quo et caecitas huius ex illius prudentia manifestior fiat, et felicitas illius ex huius miseranda fatuitate praemineat. Sermo 73, Super Cantica, SBO II:234; Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs IV, trans. Irene Edmonds, intro. Jean Leclercq (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1980), 77.*

¹⁵ *Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:142-145; Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs III, trans. Kilian Walsh and Irene Edmonds (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1979), 130-134. Bernard's allegorical interpretation of the unripe figs is characteristic of a typology developed in the second to fourth centuries by the Church Fathers as an anti-Jewish polemic. See Jean Daniélou, From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers (London: Burns and Oates, 1960), 1.*

¹⁶ *Quod in ea est, de Spiritu Sancto est, ac per hoc subtile totum et suave. Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:143; On the Song of Songs III:132.*

¹⁷ *Nam actus in bellis, affectus in lucris totus erat, intellectus in crassitudine litterae, cultus in sanguine pecudum et armentorum... Cum Christum occidit, tunc completa est malatia eius. Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:143-144; On the Song of Songs III, 132.*

¹⁸ *O grossum vipereumque affectum, odire hominem qui hominum et corpora sanat, et salvat animas! Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:144; On the Song of Songs III, 133.*

Deum non intellexerunt nec in operibus Dei!). The abbot pointed to Isaiah 1:3, “The ox knows his owner and the ass its owner’s stable; Israel does not know me, the people do not understand me,” as evidence for those who might possibly complain he is insulting Jews by calling their intellect cow-like.¹⁹ “Look at me Jew, I am milder than your prophet. I compare you to beasts of burden, he places you under them.”²⁰ Bernard then made reference to Jesus’ rebuke of the Jews for not believing in him or the works of the Father done through him.²¹ The abbot continued:

Not the driving out of demons, nor the obedience of the elements, nor giving life to the dead was able to turn them from this beastly and more than beastly inheritance; from this blindness not less strange than miserable, and they rushed forth to this horrendous and enormously great crime of putting their sacrilegious hands on the majestic Lord.²²

Bernard concluded that it was at this moment, not the crucifixion, but the attempt of the Jews to seize Jesus in response to his condemnation of their unbelief, recorded in John 10:39, that the fig tree produced unripe figs. “And it may be seen clearly that the laws of those people began to depart, just as was prophesied the old were abandoned as the new arrived, and in the same way the unripe figs decayed and were replaced by good figs.”²³

¹⁹ *Nimium me fortasse queratur in sui suggillatione Iudaeus, qui intellectum illius dico bovinum. Sed legat in Isaia, et plus quam bovinum audiet: “Cognovit bos, inquit, possessorem suum, et asinus praesepe domine sui. Israel non cognovit me, populus meus non intellexit.” Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:144; On the Song of Songs III, 133. Augustine used this same reference from Isaiah 1:3 to describe Jewish rejection of Christianity. See Paula Fredriksen, *Augustine and the Jews* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 2008), 283.*

²⁰ *Vides me, Iudae, mitiorem tibi Propheta tuo. Ego comparavi te iumentis, ille subicit. Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:144; On the Song of Songs III, 133.*

²¹ *Et si mihi, inquit, non creditis, operibus credite; et si non facio opera Patris mei, nolite credere. Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:144; On the Song of Songs III:133-134. The reference is from John 10:37-38.*

²² *Non fuga daemonum, non oboedientia elementorum, non vita mortuorum, bestialem hanc, et plus quam bestialem, hebetudinem ab eis depellere quivit; de qua non minus mirabili quam miserabili caecitate factum est, ut in illud tam horrendum tamque enormiter grossum facinus proruerent, Domino maiestatis incientes manus sacrilegas. Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:144; On the Song of Songs III, 134.*

²³ *Ex tunc itaque dici potuit, quia ficus protulit grossos suos, cum iam videlicet legitima illius populi esse coeperunt quasi in exitu super summum, ut novis, iuxta veterem prophetiam, supervenientibus, vetera proicerentur: non aliter sane, quam quomodo grossi cadunt et cedunt suborinentibus ficibus bonis. Sermo 60, Super Cantica, SBO II:144; On the Song of Songs III, 134.*

Bernard wrote of the Jews in his crusade letter to the people of Bavaria, Eastern France, and England that “here and dispersed in every region they are banished as punishment for their great crime and testimony to our redemption.”²⁴ They bear up under the hard captivity of the Christian princes.²⁵ However, the abbot then made clear his belief, based on Romans 11:25-26, that God would rectify the Jewish crime of rejecting Christ in favor of their Law by bringing about the conversion of the Jews. “At last, when the fullness of the Gentiles will come in, all Israel will be saved.”²⁶ This conviction that the Jews were predestined by God to convert to Christ prior to the end of the world was not taken solely from Romans 11:25-26, nor was it merely a footnote in his thinking on the Jews. Throughout his writings the Cistercian abbot expressed his belief of God’s ultimate destiny for the Jews.

One example is *Sermo 14, Super Cantica*. Bernard began the sermon by criticizing the Jews’ rejection of the pagans who were brought to God by his mercy. “What will the just and merciful Lord do? The one glories in the Law and applauds their self justification, and yet does not require grace, but despises those who feel that need.”²⁷ Bernard then explained that the Jews continued to hold to the Law rather than the mercy of God.

Bernard did say that replacing the laws of the Jewish people was a gradual process. For example, he noted that circumcision and the sacrifices were not immediately invalidated as a remedy for original sin when the Lord instituted baptism. They only gradually lost their saving power until the remedy of baptism became common knowledge. See *Epistola 77, Ad Magistrum Hugonem de Sancto Victore*, SBO VII:188-189; Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Baptism and the Office of Bishops*, trans. Pauline Matarasso (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2004), 156-157.

²⁴ *Propter hoc et in omnes dispersi sunt regiones, ut dum iustus tanti facinoris poenas luunt ubique, testes sint nostrae redemptionis. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 462.*

²⁵ *...duram sustinent captivitatem sub principibus christianis. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 462.*

²⁶ *Denique, cum introierit gentium plenitudo, tunc omnis Israel salvus erit. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 462.* Fredriksen asserts that Augustine did not interpret Romans 11:25-26 to mean that all the Jews were predestined to be saved, but only those chosen by God. See Fredriksen, 328-329.

²⁷ *Quid faciet iustus et misericors Dominus, altera gloriant in lege et applaudente iustitiam sibi, nec indigente misericordia, sed despiciente ipsam quae indiget. Sermo 14, Super Cantica, SBO I:75-76; Bernard of Clairvaux, On the Song of Songs I, trans. Kilian Walsh (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 97-98.*

It is certainly out of the Law, which has never led anyone to perfection, but is a yoke which their fathers did not have the power to carry. But the Synagogue is steadfast, not looking to the lighter burden, and not the sweet yoke. It is in reasonable health and does not need the work of a doctor, and not the anointing of the Spirit. It trusts in the Law, let the Law give what freedom it is able. But there is no law that has been delivered that has the power to give life; rather it strikes down, for the written letter strikes down.²⁸

Bernard continued by telling the Synagogue, "You will wander in blindness and be abandoned in your obstinacy, while the fullness of the Gentiles, whom you proudly separated yourselves from and enviously drove away, enter in and acknowledge the God who is known in Judea, whose name is great in Israel."²⁹ This allusion to Romans 11:25, the fullness of the Gentiles coming in, led Bernard to his final point. Referring to John 9:39, where Jesus said he came to make those who see become blind (*et qui vident caeci fiunt*), Bernard wrote:

However, it will only be partly, for the Lord will not reject his people entirely, themselves servants to the seed of the Apostles and a multitude of believers, who are one in heart and spirit. But he will not reject them forever, a remnant will be saved. Again he will recognize his children of Israel and remember his compassion and not abandon them to judgment without loving mercy, a place where none can be found. Indeed, if they were taken back for their merit, judgment would come without mercy to those who did not produce mercy.³⁰

Bernard maintained that despite the Jews' insistence on holding on to their Law, coupled with their lack of mercy to Gentiles, God would one day save a remnant of them, not because of their merit, but because of God's mercy.

²⁸ *Sed Synagoga fortis est, non curat onus leve, nec iugum suave. Sana est, non est ei opus medicus, nec unctio Spiritus. Confidit in lege: liberet eam, si potest. Non autem data est lex quae possit vivificare; insuper et occidit: Littera enim occidit. Sermo 14, Super Cantica, SBO I:76; On the Song of Songs I, 98.*

²⁹ *Errori tuo caeca et contentiosa desereris, donec plenitudo gentium, quas superba spernis et invida repellis, introeat, et agnoscat etiam ipsa ipsum qui notus est in Iudaea Deus, quodque in Israel est magnum nomen eius. Sermo 14, Super Cantica, SBO I:76; On the Song of Songs I, 98.*

³⁰ *Iterum enim suscipiet Israel puerum suum, et recordabitur misericordiae suae, ut ne ibi quidem iudicium deserat comes misericordia, ubi nullum ipsa reperit locum. Alioquin si pro meritis recepisset, iudicium profecto sine misericordia ei qui non facit misericordiam. Sermo 14, Super Cantica, SBO I:76-77; On the Song of Songs I, 98-99.*

Bernard gave a very interesting interpretation of two verses in the Song of Songs describing God's divorce and eventual reconciliation with his first bride, the Synagogue. In *Sermo 67, Super Cantica*, he interpreted Song of Songs 6:2, "I am my Beloved's and he is mine" (*Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi*), as meaning that one became the bride of God through grace not merit. "Grace restores me to myself to be freely justified and free from slavery to sin."³¹ Bernard then called the Synagogue, the foolish bride, "who disregards God's justice, his gracious covenant with her, and set up her own will, and not be placed under God's justice."³² The abbot continued by stating that the Synagogue was "the wretched one who was put away, and is no longer the bride, but the Church of whom it is said, 'I have betrothed you to me in faith, I have betrothed you to me in judgment and justice, I have betrothed you to me in mercy and pity.'"³³ Because the Synagogue rejected God's mercy in favor of the Law, God put her away in favor of the Church, "Who is the true bride, the one who recognizes and acknowledges each grace."³⁴

Soon after writing *Sermo 67, Super Cantica*, Bernard revisited this subject, and in *Sermo 79, Super Cantica*, declared that the Synagogue would not be rejected by the Bridegroom forever.³⁵ Bernard explained in his interpretation of Song of Songs 3:4, "I have hold of him and will send him out until I bring him in to my mother's house and into the bedchamber of the one who bore me," how the Jews would be reconciled to God.³⁶ He began by describing the attitude the Church was to have toward the Jews. "Great is the love of the Church who does not begrudge her delights to her

³¹ *Gratia, reddit me mihi iustificatum gratis, et sic liberatum a servitute peccati. Sermo 67, Super Cantica, SBO II:195; On the Song of Songs IV, 14.*

³² *O fatuam sponsam Synagoram, quae contemnens Dei iustitiam, id est gratiam sponsi sui, et suam volens constituere, iustitiae Dei non est subiecta. Sermo 67, Super Cantica, SBO: II 195; On the Song of Songs IV, 14.*

³³ *Ob hoc misera repudiata est, et iam non est sponsa, sed Ecclesia, cui dicitur: Desponsavi te mihi in fide; desponsavi te mihi in iudicio et iustitia; desponsavi te mihi in misericordia et miserationibus. Sermo 67, Super Cantica, SBO II:195; On the Song of Songs IV, 14. Bernard quoted Hosea 3:19.*

³⁴ *Quae vere sponsa est, agnoscit ista, et utramque gratiam confitetur. Sermo 67, Super Cantica, SBO II:195; On the Song of Songs IV, 15.*

³⁵ Jean Leclercq dates Sermon 66 sometime after 1144 and Sermon 80 around 1148. The exact dates of Sermons 67 and Sermon 79 are unknown, but they would fall somewhere between 1144 and 1148. See Jean Leclercq's introduction to *On the Song of Songs IV*, xii.

³⁶ *Tenui eum nec dimittam, donec introducām illum in domum matris meae et in cubiculum genitricis meae. Sermo 79, Super Cantica, SBO II:275; On the Song of Songs IV, 141.*

rival, the Synagogue. Who could be kinder than the one who is prepared to share with her enemy the one her soul esteems highly.”³⁷ Why should the Church treat the Jews, who have rejected God’s mercy, with kindness? Bernard used John 4:22 in his answer, “Nevertheless, it is not amazing, for salvation is out of the Jews.”³⁸ The abbot then stated that Christ would go to the Jews. “To the place from which he departed the Savior is returned so that a remnant of Israel might be saved.”³⁹ Bernard continued by using Romans 11:25-26 to remind the Church of the future destiny of the Jews and to encourage the Church to desire the return of the Jews.⁴⁰

Let not the branches be ungrateful to the root, nor sons ungrateful to the mother: let not branches begrudge the root out of which they were taken, nor the sons the mother from whose breasts they sucked. Let the Church hold fast the salvation the Jews squandered: she holds it until the fullness of the gentiles comes in so that what is left of Israel may be saved.⁴¹

The Church is not to merely desire that the Jews come to salvation, “but long for them the name and grace of a bride, certainly above salvation.”⁴² The Jews, who Bernard described in *Sermo* 67 as the foolish bride who had been put away by God, would be restored as the bride of God. “The Savior, who had departed from his house and inheritance full of indignation, has now softened and turned to her in love, returning not only in the

³⁷ *Magna Ecclesia caritas, quae ne aemulae quidem Synagogae suas delicias invidet. Quid benignius, ut quem diligit anima sua, ipsum communicare parata sit et inimicae?* *Sermo* 79, *Super Cantica*, SBO II: 275; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 141-142.

³⁸ *Nec mirum tamen, quia salus ex Iudaeis est. Sermo* 79, *Super Cantica*, SBO II:275; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 142. Compare this to the First Crusade chronicler Guibert of Nogent of whom Jay Rubenstein writes, “Sometimes Guibert sounds as if he has forgotten the historical connection between Christianity and Judaism.” See Jay Rubenstein, *Guibert of Nogent: Portrait of a Medieval Mind* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002), 120.

³⁹ *Ad locum unde exierat, revertatur Salvator, ut reliquiae Israel salvae fiant. Sermo* 79, *Super Cantica*, SBO II:275; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 142.

⁴⁰ This is particularly significant in light of the persecution of the Jews taking place at the beginning of the Second Crusade, which occurred approximately at the time *Sermo* 79 was written.

⁴¹ *Non rami radici, non matri filii ingrati sint: non rami radici invideant quod ex ea sumpserunt, non filii matri quod de eius suxere uberibus. Teneat itaque Ecclesia firmiter salutem, quam Iudaea perdidit: ipsa apprehendit, donec plenitudo gentium introeat, et sic omnis Israel salvus fiat. Sermo* 79, *Super Cantica*, SBO II:275; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 142.

⁴² *Quod et nomen sponsae illi optat, et gratiam. Prorsus super salutem hoc. Sermo* 79, *Super Cantica*, SBO II:275; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 142.

manner of Savior, but Spouse.”⁴³ What is the Church’s role in this reconciliation? “And now she promises to bring him back, and restore her lost salvation to her mother’s house.”⁴⁴ Because of her role in bringing about the reconciliation between the Lord and the Jews, Bernard told the Church, “You are blessed by the Lord, daughter, for restraining his indignation and restoring the inheritance. You are blessed by your mother, who by the means of your blessing, his [Lord’s] anger has been averted, salvation has returned, returned with him who says, ‘I am your salvation.’”⁴⁵ The abbot made it clear that the Church brought about this reconciliation and asked, “In what manner can she give up her bridegroom to another, and not speak her desire?”⁴⁶ Bernard insisted that the Church did not give the bridegroom up to the Synagogue. “She desired to be a good daughter, nevertheless not to give him up, but to share him. One is sufficient for the two, except they are no longer two, but one in him.”⁴⁷

Bernard’s comments about Jews at times may have been demeaning, but his theology concerning the Jews was quite optimistic. The Jews were under God’s judgment not because they were responsible for the death of Christ, but because they rejected the grace God offered them through Christ and preferred to hold on to the Law. However, God had not abandoned the Jews. The time would come when the Jews would convert to Christ and be brought back to God. They would then share an equal status with the Church as the Bride of Christ.

⁴³ *Salvator indignabundus exierat de domo et hereditate sua; et nunc ad huius gratiam mitigatus inflectitur, ita ut redeat non modo Salvator, sed Sponsa. Sermo 79, Super Cantica, SBO II:276; On the Song of Songs IV, 143.*

⁴⁴ *... et nunc ista pollicetur reducere illum, et domui matris suae perditam salutem restituere. Sermo 79, Super Cantica, SBO II:276; On the Song of Songs IV, 143.*

⁴⁵ *Benedicta tu a domino, filia, quae et indignationem compescis, et hereditatem restituis. Benedicta tu matri tuae, cuius benedictione avertitur ira, revertitur salus, revertitur qui dicat illi: Salus tua ego sum. Sermo 79, Super Cantica, SBO II:276; On the Song of Songs IV, 143.*

⁴⁶ *Sed momento quia quae has conciliat amicitias, sponsa est. Quomodo ergo sponsum et hunc sponsum alteri cedit, ne dicam cupit? Sermo 79, Super Cantica, SBO II:276; On the Song of Songs IV, 143.*

⁴⁷ *Non est ita. Cupit quidem illum matri filia bona, non tamen ut cedat illi, sed ut communice. Sufficit unus duabus, nisi quod iam non erunt duae, sed una in ipso. Sermo 79, Super Cantica, SBO II:276; On the Song of Songs IV, 143.*

Threat to the Jews

Bernard's vision of the Church's desire for the eventual conversion of the Jews was put to the test at the beginning of the Second Crusade. The Second Crusade was prompted by the fall of the city of Edessa to 'Imad ad-Din Zengi on December 24th, 1144. Pope Eugenius III responded a year later by issuing the encyclical, *Quantum praedecessores*, which called on Western Christians to follow in the footsteps of those who participated in Pope Urban's crusade to liberate the Holy Land some fifty years earlier.⁴⁸ Although in poor health and contemplating retirement in his monastery at Clairvaux, Bernard became in 1146 the leading advocate for the Second Crusade.⁴⁹ The twelfth century chronicler, Odo of Deuil, wrote that Bernard hastened about and preached everywhere despite his frail and lifeless body until the number of those bearing the cross had dramatically increased.⁵⁰ After a successful preaching tour of France, Bernard turned his attention to the recruitment of crusaders in Germany. One other matter he had to address was a complaint he received by letter from Henry, Archbishop of Mainz, concerning the preaching of an insubordinate Cistercian brother, Radulf.⁵¹

Radulf went on an unauthorized preaching tour of Germany to promote the Second Crusade. Radulf's goal was not limited to enlisting knights to go to the Holy Land. The twelfth century Austrian bishop and historian, Otto of Freising, wrote that Radulf preached that Jews should be slain as foes of the Christian religion.⁵² Rabbi Ephraim of Bonn, who at the time was a thirteen year old witness of Radulf's preaching, quoted the monk as saying, "Avenge the crucified one upon his enemies who stand

⁴⁸ See Jonathan Phillips, *The Second Crusade: Extending the Frontiers of Christendom* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 37-60.

⁴⁹ Thomas Asbridge writes, "Bernard of Clairvaux must still be regarded as the primary force behind the preaching of the Second Crusade." See Thomas Asbridge, *The Crusades—The Authoritative History of the War for the Holy Land* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2010), 209.

⁵⁰ Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientum*, trans. Virginia Gingerick Berry (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1948), 11. Odo of Deuil was the chaplain of Louis VII.

⁵¹ This letter is not extant.

⁵² Otto of Freising, *The Deeds of Frederick of Barbarossa*, trans. Charles Christopher Mierow (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 74.

before you, then go to war against the Ishmaelites.”⁵³ Otto of Freising recorded that Radulf inflamed thousands of Germans and a large number of Jews were killed.⁵⁴

Bernard caught up with Radulf in Mainz, which was the scene of a particularly violent outbreak against the Jews during the First Crusade. In 1096, Count Emicho of Leiningen in the Rhineland led knights in an attack on Jews at Speyer and Worms before proceeding to Mainz. The Count and his knights received considerable support from the townspeople and about a thousand Jews were killed at Mainz.⁵⁵ Radulf found similar support at Mainz, but Bernard confronted him there and ordered him to stop roving the land and preaching, violations of the Benedictine Rule. Bernard then went to the townspeople of Mainz to repair the damage caused by Radulf. Ephraim of Bonn wrote that Bernard spoke to the villagers in a harsh manner, telling them that it was good to go against the Ishmaelites, but whoever touches a Jew to take his life is like one who touched Jesus himself.⁵⁶ Ephraim continued by stating that Bernard used a passage from the Psalms (Psalm 59:11, Psalm 58:12 in Vulgate) as the basis of his attempt to protect the Jews. “My disciple Radulf, who has spoken about annihilating the Jews, has spoken in error, for in the Book of Psalms it is written of them: ‘Slay them not, lest my people forget.’”⁵⁷ Otto of Freising reported that an insurrection was averted only out of the townspeople’s regard for Bernard’s saintliness.⁵⁸

Paula Fredriksen makes the observation that Bernard followed Augustine of Hippo in using Psalm 59:11 as proof that Christians were not to kill Jews.⁵⁹ Bernard used this text and others in the letter he wrote to Henry,

⁵³ Ephraim of Bonn, “*Sefer Zekbirah*,” in *The Jews and the Crusaders*, trans. Shlomo Eidelberg (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977), 122.

⁵⁴ Otto of Freising, 74.

⁵⁵ Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades—Volume One* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 137-138. Matthew Gabriele provides a detailed analysis of the incident demonstrating that many may have thought Count Emicho’s attack on the Jews was in fulfillment of eschatological expectations that the Last Days were at hand and the Jews were to be eliminated. See Matthew Gabriele, “Against the Enemies of Christ,” in *Christian Attitudes toward the Jews in the Middle Ages: A Casebook*, ed. Michael Frassetto (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 61-82.

⁵⁶ Ephraim of Bonn, 122.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Otto of Freising, 74.

⁵⁹ Fredriksen, XI-XII. Robert Chazan notes that Bernard’s use of Psalm 59 as a scriptural argument against anti-Jewish violence actually reinforced age-old Jewish hostilities.

Archbishop of Mainz, condemning the actions of Radulf. He reminded Henry what the position of the Church toward the Jews should be:

Would it not be a rich triumph for the Church to convince and convert each of the Jews than at once and the same time devour them in the mouth of the sword? Has that universal prayer of the Church been made in vain, which is offered for the faithless Jews from the rising of the sun to its setting, so that God and Lord may take away the veil of their heart so that the light of truth might throw out the darkness? If she did not confidently hope for them to believe, her caring was unnecessary and her prayers in vain.⁶⁰

Bernard then quoted Psalm 59:11 (Psalm 58:12 in Vulgate), "Not for their destruction I pray" (*Videas ne occidas eos*), as proof that Christians are not to harm Jews. He followed that Scriptural text with two more texts that he believed prophesied the eventual conversion of the Jews. The first text was Romans 11:25-26, "When the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in, then all Israel will be saved" (*Cum plenitudo gentium intraverit, tunc omnis Israel salvus fiet*), a text that he used in *Sermo 60* and *Sermo 79, Super Cantica* in reference to the final conversion of the Jews. The second text was from Psalm 147:2 (Psalm 146:2 in Vulgate), "The Lord is rebuilding Jerusalem, assembling the scattered flock of Israel" (*Aedificans Ierusalem Dominus dispersiones Israelis congregabit*), an interesting reference in light of the events of the Second Crusade. Certainly Bernard hoped that the continued Christian rule of Jerusalem meant that this final conversion of the Jews might be near.⁶¹ However, the abbot wrote that Radulf's foul

"Writing with divinely inspired foreknowledge, the psalmist already discerned the Jews as enemies, as assailants, as fierce men moved by groundless hatred. The occasional crusader sense of Jews as the worst of the enemies of Christianity and Christendom was therefore hardly unwarranted." See Robert Chazan, "From the First Crusade to the Second: Evolving Perceptions of the Christian-Jewish Conflict," in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, eds. Michael Signer and John van Engen (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 48-49.

⁶⁰ *Nonne copiosius triumphat Ecclesia de Iudaeis per singulos dies vel convincens, vel convertens eos, quam si semel et simul consumeret eos in ore gladii? Numquid incassum constituta est illa universalis oratio Ecclesiae, quae offertur pro perfidis Iudaeis a solis ortu usque ad occasum, ut Deus et Dominus auferat velamen de cordibus eorum, ut ad lumen veritatis a suis tenebris eruantur? Nisi enim eos, qui increduli sunt, credituros speraret, superfluum videretur et vanum orare pro eis.* *Epistola 365*, SBO VIII:321; Letter 393, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 466.

⁶¹ Berger writes that Bernard's use of Psalm 147:2 as a prophecy of Jewish redemption is especially surprising in light of Bernard's frequent referral to Jerusalem as a spiritual term. See Berger, 97-98. However, the purpose of the Second Crusade was to ensure continued

heresy (*immundissima haeresis*) threatened the promises concerning the Jews that the abbot found in the Scriptures. Although writing to Archbishop Henry, Bernard addressed this question to Radulf. "Who are you to make the prophets liars and empty out all the treasure of love and compassion of Jesus Christ?"⁶²

In his crusade letter to the clergy and people of eastern France and Bavaria, and the people of England, Bernard used the Psalm 59 passage as evidence that the Jews were not to be slain. "Ask anyone who is acquainted with the divine pages what they read prophesied of the Jews in the Psalm."⁶³ He then included the Romans 11:25-26 passage in the crusade letter to express the belief of the final conversion of the Jews. "The Apostle affirms that when the fullness of the Gentiles will be entered, then all Israel will be saved."⁶⁴ Bernard observed that the Jews who die prior to the time of this final conversion will remain in death.⁶⁵ Then he paraphrased Wisdom 3:6 by writing that the Jews "are now turned to their evening of captivity, and in time there shall be regard for them."⁶⁶ Bernard cautioned the crusaders that killing Jews will thwart this plan of God. "If the Jews are completely wiped away, what will become of our hope for their final promised welfare, in their future conversion?"⁶⁷ Bernard concluded his letter with a reference to Romans 9:4-5, writing that it was an act of Christian piety for the subjected Jews to be spared "because they have the law and promise of their

Christian rule over the earthly city of Jerusalem. It was the continued Christian rule over Jerusalem that would expedite the final conversion of the Jews to Christianity.

⁶² *Tune es ille qui mendaces facies prophetas et evacuabis omnes thesauros pietatis et misericordiae Iesu Christi?* Epistola 365, SBO VIII:322; Letter 393, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 466.

⁶³ *Interrogate eos qui divinas paginas norunt, quid in Psalmo legerint prophetatum de Iudaeis.* Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 462.

⁶⁴ *Denique, cum introierit gentium plenitudo, tunc omnis Israel salvus erit, ait Apostolus.* Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 462-463.

⁶⁵ *Interim sane quimoritur, manet in morte.* Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 463.

⁶⁶ *Convertentur tamen ad vesperam, et in tempore erit respectus eorum.* Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 462.

⁶⁷ *Si Iudaei penitus atteruntur, unde iam sperabitur eorum in fine promissa salus, in fine futura conversio?* Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 463. Watt writes that in 1063, Pope Alexander II also argued that the Jews should be protected because God has predestined them for salvation. See Watt, 146.

fathers, and out of them is the flesh of Christ, who is over all God praised in all ages.”⁶⁸

In 1153, the last year of his life, Bernard made one final comment about the eventual conversion of the Jews to Christianity, which is found in his treatise to Pope Eugenius III, *De consideratione*. In book three of the treatise, Bernard advised the pope:

Therefore it concerns you to be able to give every effort so that the unbelieving be converted to faith, converts not turn away, those that turn away turn back; furthermore to set in order the perverse to straightness, call back the corrupt to truth, convince the corrupted by invincible truths so that they may flee from their faults, if that is possible, or if not, destroy their capability to corrupt others.⁶⁹

What responsibility did the Pope have to convert or correct the theology of the Jews? The abbot wrote, “Such is the case that at this time you are excused from the Jews: they have a boundary that they are not able at this point to get past.”⁷⁰ He explained the boundary by quoting Romans 11:25, “It is necessary that the full number of Gentiles precede them.”⁷¹ In the context of this treatise, the “gentiles” are the unbelievers and heretics. Under the terms of Romans 11:25, the Church could do nothing to bring about the conversion of the Jews except be diligent in the conversion of the Gentiles. In fact, Bernard seemed frustrated that this had not yet happened. “Assuredly at some time it is necessary for the fullness of the Gentiles to come in. Are we waiting for faith to fall upon them?”⁷² Once the

⁶⁸ *Est autem christianae pietatis, ut debellare superbos, sic et parcere subiectis his praesertim quorum est legislatio et promissa, quorum patres, et ex quibus Christus secundum carnem, qui est super omnia Deus benedictus in saecula. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:317; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 463.*

⁶⁹ *Interest proinde tua dare operam quam possis, ut increduli convertantur ad fidem, conversi non avertantur, aversi revertantur, porro perversi ordinentur ad rectitudinem, subversi ad veritatem revocentur, subversores invictis rationibus convincantur, ut vel emendentur ipsi, si fieri potest, vel, si non, perdant auctoritatem facultatemque alios subvertendi. SBO III:433; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Five Books on Consideration—Advice to the Pope*, trans. John D. Anderson and Elizabeth T. Kennan (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1976), 82.*

⁷⁰ *Esto, de Iudeis excusat te tempus: habent terminum suum qui praeveniri non poterit. SBO III:433; Five Books on Consideration, 82.*

⁷¹ *Plenitudinem gentium praeire oportet. SBO III: 433; Five Books on Consideration, 82.*

⁷² *Et quidem quandoque perveniat gentium plenitudo necesse est. Expectamus ut in eas incidat fides? SBO III:433; Five Books on Consideration, 83.* Fred Gladstone Bratton writes that his impression is that Bernard intervened often to prevent the slaughter of the Jews solely because of his desire to convert the Jews to Christianity. However, Bernard’s treatise

full number of Gentiles ordained by God was brought into the Church, then the boundary that prevents the Jews from being converted will be lifted, and they too will be brought into the Church.

Bernard and the Muslims

The place of the Jews both in the Bible and in the Christian community drew the attention of Bernard, and they were a frequent topic in his writings. In contrast, the Cistercian abbot wrote very little about Muslims and Islam. What he did write was in response to the Muslim threat on Jerusalem. What did Jerusalem mean to Bernard? It would seem as if Bernard was more interested in the heavenly Jerusalem rather than the earthly Jerusalem threatened by the Muslims. He warned monks not to participate in the Second Crusade on threat of excommunication (*debitae excommunicationis sententiae subiacebit*).⁷³ He wrote, "It is not the purpose of the monk to search for earthly but heavenly Jerusalem, and this not by setting out on his feet, but advancing in his affections."⁷⁴ He encouraged his Cistercian brothers to be "imitating as best as they can the ways of the heavenly Jerusalem with honest and well ordered conduct."⁷⁵ He commended a young canon named Philip for giving up his plans to join the crusade in order to pursue the heavenly Jerusalem.

Therefore he is no longer a curious spectator, but a devoted inhabitant and an enrolled citizen of Jerusalem, however not of this earth, which is connected to mount Sinai in Arabia, which is enslaved with her children, but that which is set free, which is our mother from above.⁷⁶

to Pope Eugenius indicates that he believed the Jews would convert at the time God predestined them to convert, not as a result of mission efforts aimed at the Jews. See Fred Gladstone Bratton, *The Crime of Christendom—The Theological Sources of Christian Anti-Semitism* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969), 113.

⁷³ *Epistola* 549, SBO VIII:512; Letter 396, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 469.

⁷⁴ *Neque enim terrenam, sed caelestem requirere Ierusalem monarchum propositum est, et hoc non pedibus proficiscendo, sed affectibus proficiendo. Epistola* 399, SBO VIII:379-380; Letter 431, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 503.

⁷⁵ ... *mores supernae illius Iersalem conversatione honesta et ordinata pro viribus imitantes. Sermo* 55, *Super Cantica*, SBO II:112; *On the Song of Songs* III, 84.

⁷⁶ *Factus est ergo non curiosus tantum spectator, sed devotus habitator et civis conscriptus Ierusalem, non autem terrenae huius, cui Arabiae mons Sina coniunctus est, quae servit cum filiis suis, sed liberae illius, quae est sursum mater nostra. Epistola* 64, SBO VII:157; Letter 67, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 91. Here Bernard referred to Galatians 4:26.

In that same letter, he insisted that pursuing the heavenly Jerusalem could be done at Clairvaux. "It [Clairvaux] is united by a kindred spirit to Jerusalem, which is in heaven, by a total devotion of the heart and likeness of conduct."⁷⁷ Adriaan Bredero writes that for Bernard, "Jerusalem was the symbol of the eternal bliss that one enters through a spiritual and monastic conversion."⁷⁸

In spite of his devotion to the heavenly Jerusalem through the monastic life of Clairvaux, Bernard was greatly concerned about the welfare of earthly Jerusalem.⁷⁹ He argued that it was legitimate that those who were divinely ordained (*divinitus ordinatis*) to military service (*militiam*) be committed on behalf of Zion, "the city of our strength (*urbs fortitudinis nostrae*)."⁸⁰ He reminded William, Patriarch of Jerusalem, of the honor of his position. "You alone, it is said, the Lord has chosen to be before his companions of the household of bishops, to enter his tabernacle each day and adore the place where his feet have stood."⁸¹ He told the Patriarch that Jerusalem was far more holy and renowned than where Moses stood. "That

⁷⁷ *Et si vultis scire, Claravallis est. Ipsa est Ierusalem, ei quae in caelis est, tota mentis devotione, et conversationis imitatione, et cognatione quadam spiritus sociata. Epistola 64, SBO VII:158; Letter 67, The Letters of St. Bernard, 91.*

⁷⁸ Adriaan H. Bredero, *Christendom and Christianity in the Middle Ages*, trans. Reinder Bruinsma (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 103.

⁷⁹ Sylvia Schein writes, "Bernard attempted to resolve the active pursuit of Earthly Jerusalem with the contemplative pursuit of Heavenly Jerusalem." See Sylvia Schein, *Gateway to the Heavenly City: Crusader Jerusalem and the Catholic West (1099-1187)* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 121. William J. Purkis writes, "Indeed, the emphasis placed in the Cistercian preaching on the importance of the earthly Jerusalem has frequently been underestimated." See William J. Purkis, *Crusading Spirituality in the Holy Land and Iberia c.1095-c.1187* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), 97.

⁸⁰ SBO III:218; Bernard of Clairvaux, *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, trans. M. Conrad Geenia (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2000), 40. Peter Raedts argues that Bernard's concern for the earthly Jerusalem was not a relapse into a literal interpretation of the importance of Jerusalem. Bernard saw the earthly Jerusalem as an image of the heavenly city of Jerusalem and thus able to direct the laity to the Jerusalem above. Monks needed no such help and therefore were discouraged from participating in a crusade or even going on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. See Peter Raedts, "St. Bernard of Clairvaux and Jerusalem," in *The Centrality of Jerusalem*, eds Marcel Poorthuis and Chana Safrai (Kampen: Kok Pharos Publishing, 1996), 176-189.

⁸¹ *Te solum, inquam, elegit Dominus prae consortibus tuis, ut sis ei in episcopum familiarem, qui per singulos dies introeas in tabernaculum eius et adores in loco ubi steterunt pedes eius. Epistola 393, SBO VIII:365; Letter 217, The Letters of St. Bernard, 295.*

was holy, but this is more holy.”⁸² Jerusalem was more holy because there Christ earned redemption for sinners. “O what reverence is in this place, in which the sweet and upright Lord poured in equal degree wine and oil into our wounds, and washed the dirt of the children of Zion in the blood of the Lamb, and the merciful Father and God of all consolations, put in place a covenant with us.”⁸³ The abbot again emphasized to the Patriarch how Christ made earthly Jerusalem holy. “This place is by far more holy than where Moses stood, and far more celebrated, the place of the Lord, the place where it is said he came by means of water and blood: not in water alone, as Moses, but in water and blood.”⁸⁴ Bernard was particularly moved by Christ’s tomb. He wrote the Patriarch of Jerusalem, “Here is the place where they laid him.”⁸⁵ He called Christ’s tomb the prize (*praemium*) of those who journey to Jerusalem. “How sweet it is for the pilgrims, after the great fatigue of their long journey, after the many dangers of land and sea, that at last to rest where they recognize the Lord rested!”⁸⁶ It may have been the loss of Edessa to ‘Imad ad-Zengi in December of 1144 that prompted Pope Eugenius III to call for the Second Crusade, of which Bernard became the chief spokesman and recruiter. However, the abbot’s crusade letters did not mention retaking Edessa. Bernard’s interest was in

⁸² *Sanctus ille, sed iste sanctior. Epistola 393, SBO VIII:365; Letter 217, The Letters of St. Bernard, 295.*

⁸³ *O quam metuendus est locus ille, in quo dulcis et rectus Dominus vulneribus nostris vinum pariter infudit et oleum, in quo abluit sordes filiarum Sion in sanguine Agni, constituit nobiscum pactum foederis Pater misericordiarum et Deus totius consolationis! Epistola 393, SBO VIII: 366-367; Letter 217, The Letters of St. Bernard, 295-296.*

⁸⁴ *Ecce locus longe sacratior illo in quo stetit Moyses, et longe nobilior, quia locus Domini, locus, inquam, illius est, qui venit per aquam et sanguinem: non in aqua tantum, sicut Moyses, sed in aqua et in sanguine. Epistola 393, SBO VIII:366; Letter 217, The Letters of St. Bernard, 296.*

⁸⁵ *Ecce locus ubi posuerunt eum. Epistola 393, Letter 217, SBO VIII:366; The Letters of St. Bernard, 296.*

⁸⁶ *Quam dulce est peregrinis, post multam longi itineris fatigationem, post plurima terrae marisque pericula, ibi tandem quiescere, ubi et agnoscunt suum Dominum quivise! SBO III:236; In Praise of the New Knighthood, 75. Dominique Iogna-Prat contrasts Bernard’s enthusiasm for the earthly city of Jerusalem with Peter the Venerable who “appears to have been more strongly attracted to the Holy Land as a symbol than to the holy places as physical entities.” See Dominique Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion: Cluny and Christendom Face Heresy, Judaism, and Islam (1000-1150)*, trans. Graham Robert Edwards (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 335.*

protecting Jerusalem, and it was in that capacity that his attention was drawn to the Muslims.

Bernard first wrote of the Muslims in his treatise, *De laude novae militiae*. This exhortation to the Knights of the Temple (*milites Templi*) was written in the early 1130s in response to three requests from their master, Hugh of Payns.⁸⁷ The Knights of the Temple had been given the responsibility by the Council of Troyes to protect pilgrims travelling to the Holy Land from Muslim attacks.⁸⁸ Bernard began the treatise by comparing Muslims to the evil driven from the world by Christ when he was present on the earth.

I heard of a new class of military service has newly risen in the land and the region where the Morning Sun from on high once visited in the flesh and with a strong hand drove out the rulers of darkness, so now he expels their supporters, children of disobedience, dispersing them by the hand of his mighty.⁸⁹

The abbot celebrated the killing of the Muslims. "In the death of the pagan the Christian glories because Christ is glorified."⁹⁰ However, it was not the mere act of killing Muslims that was glorified. Bernard justified their killing as necessary to defend Jerusalem from their attacks.

Therefore with an axe let the race who chooses warfare be scattered and those who disturb us be cut off, and all the workers of iniquity of the city of God be destroyed, those who long to carry off the inestimable wealth placed in Jerusalem by the Christian people, pollute the sacred things, and take possession of the sanctuary of God as their inheritance. Let both of the swords of the faithful fall on the neck of the enemy,

⁸⁷ SBO III:213-214; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 31 and 33. See Malcolm Barber, *The New Knighthood: A History of the Order of the Temple* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), for a discussion on the dating of this treatise.

⁸⁸ Marie Luise Bulst-Thiele, "The Influence of St. Bernard of Clairvaux on the Formation of the Order of the Knights Templar," in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. Michael Gervers (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 60; Barber, 12-16.

⁸⁹ *Novum militiae genus ortum nuper auditur in terris, et in illa regione, quam olim in carne praesens visitavit Oriens ex alto, ut unde tunc in fortitudine manus suae tenebrarum principes exturbavit, inde et modo ipsorum satellites, filios diffidentiae, in manu fortium suorum dissipatos exterminet.* SBO III:214; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 33.

⁹⁰ *In morte pagani christianus gloriatur, quia Christus glorificatur.* SBO III:217; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 39. Norman Housley argues that with this statement, Bernard came close to validating sacred acts of violence as possessing spiritual value in themselves rather than as a means to an end. See Norman Housley, *Fighting for the Cross: Crusading to the Holy Land* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 218.

to the destruction of all the lofty who extol themselves against the knowledge of God, which is the Christian faith.⁹¹

Bernard then made this intriguing comment about what Christ would do when the Muslim threat to Jerusalem was overcome. "Once they have been expelled, he will return to his heritage and his house."⁹²

It is important to note that Bernard referred to Muslims as pagans, not heretics. They were people of another religion who supported the rulers of darkness, reflecting the thinking of those of the First Crusade who saw themselves as engaged in a war against worshippers of Mohammed.⁹³ John Tolan observes that the portrayal of Muslims as pagans grows out of a propagandistic effort to justify and glorify the actions of the first and second Crusades.⁹⁴ Bernard may have used the term pagan in reference to Muslims for this reason. However, he did not sanction the Knights of the Temple to kill them simply because they were pagans. Bernard wrote:

Certainly the pagans do not have to be killed if another way is able to stop them from treating the faithful in a hostile or oppressive way. However, now it is good to kill them rather than to abandon the righteous to the certain destiny of the rod of sinners so that by chance the righteous extend their hand to iniquity.⁹⁵

⁹¹ *Secure proinde dissipentur gentes quae bella volunt, et abscondantur qui nos conturbant, et disperdantur de civitate Domini omnes operantes iniquitatem, qui repositas in Ierosolymis christiani populi inestimabiles divitias tollere gestiunt, sancta polluere, et hereditate possidere sanctuarium Dei. Exseratur gladius uterque fidelium in cervices inimicorum, ad destruendam omnem altitudinem extollentem se adversus scientiam Dei, quae est christianorum fides.* SBO III:218; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 40-41.

⁹² *Quibus expulsis revertetur ipse in hereditatem domumque suam.* SBO III:218; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 41.

⁹³ Norman Daniel writes that some medieval theologians hint at the idea that any belief in a false God is idolatry, and any false belief in God is a belief in a false God. This thinking would justify classifying Muslims as pagans. See Norman Daniel, *Heroes and Saracens: An Interpretation of the Chansons de Geste* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1984), 145.

⁹⁴ John V. Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2002), 106.

⁹⁵ *Non quidem vel pagani necandi essent, si quo modo aliter possent a nimia infestatione seu oppressione fidelium cohibere. Nunc autem melius est ut occidantur, quam certe relinquatur virga peccatorum super sortem iustorum, ne forte extendant iusti ad iniquitatem manus suas.* SBO III:217; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 40.

The abbot approved of the destruction of these pagans, Muslims, only because they threatened the faithful in Jerusalem.

Muslims again came to the attention of Bernard through a letter he received in 1144 from Peter the Venerable. In 1142 Peter traveled to Castile and León for the purpose of visiting Cluniac houses in Spain and receiving a donation from King Alfonso VII of León.⁹⁶ The Spanish tour opened the Cluniac abbot's eyes to the realization that, as he said, Satan had occupied nearly half the world by means of the Saracens.⁹⁷ Gavin Langmuir writes that Peter was not opposed to supporting open warfare against the enemies of Christ.⁹⁸ However, at this point Peter chose to combat the Saracens by preparing the resources needed to wage a war of ideas against Islam. These resources were known as the *Collectio toledana* and included an annotated translation of the Qur'an by Robert Ketton, which was commissioned by Peter, and the translation of the *Risalat al-Kindi*, a ninth century document summarizing the main points of Islamic doctrine.⁹⁹ Peter used this material to write his own anti-Islamic tract, *Summa totius*

⁹⁶ Kritzeck writes that the King's grandfather, Alfonso VI, had promised Cluny an annual census donation of two thousand *metcales*, a donation which was far in arrears. See Kritzeck, 11. Tolán writes that Peter's Spanish tour took place over the years 1142-1143. See John V. Tolán, *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2008), 51. However, Charles Bishko argues that the "abbot's Spanish sojourn can now be taken as falling entirely within the calendar year 1142." See Charles Julian Bishko, "Peter the Venerable's Traverse of Spain: Some Further Observations," in *Spanish and Portuguese Monastic History, 600-1300* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), 3.

⁹⁷ Gavin Langmuir, *Toward a Definition of Antisemitism* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1990), 199. Langmuir also points out that some of Peter's "own monks were even suggesting that Christ had never said openly in the Gospels that he was God."

⁹⁸ Langmuir cites a sermon Peter preached probably at a crusading assembly in 1147 where he praised the first crusaders who liberated the Holy Sepulcher with their pious swords. See Langmuir, 200.

⁹⁹ Iogna-Prat, 338-339. The *Collectio toledana* also included three other translations on Islam: *Fabulae Sarracenorum*, *Liber generationes Mahumeth*, and *Doctrina Muhammad*. Thomas Burman makes the point that Robert Ketton's annotated translation of the Qur'an helped acquaint Latin readers with the broader background of Islamic history and belief, but often attacked the text itself. See Thomas E. Burman, *Reading the Qur'an in Latin Christendom 1140-1150* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 60-76. Daniel adds that Ketton's annotations reinforced the idea of Islam as a violent religion, which led Peter to believe that Muslims thought killing was better than disputing. See Daniel, 94.

haeresis Saracenorum.¹⁰⁰ He concluded this tract by writing that at great expense he had the total teaching of this impious sect and the life of its wicked inventor translated from Arabic into Latin in order to “lay bare and make it come to our notice that it might be known how filthy and worthless this heresy was, that the flame of the Holy Spirit might incite some servant of God to refute it in writing.”¹⁰¹

The servant of God that Peter had in mind was Bernard of Clairvaux. Peter made this request of Bernard in a lengthy letter dated between 1143 and 1144, the bulk of which is a plea for peace between the Cluniacs and the Cistercians.¹⁰² Near the end of the letter, Peter wrote Bernard that he was sending a gift of rock-salt, a symbol of the brotherly love between the two orders. He then told Bernard of another gift he was sending. “I am sending you our new translation disputing against that most wretched heresy of Mohammed.”¹⁰³ Scholars are of the opinion that this new translation was the *Risalat al-Kindi*, a ninth or tenth century treatise written in Arabic by a Christian that summarized the main points of Islamic doctrine.¹⁰⁴ Peter explained how the translation was produced and then concluded, “When the many unpolished and confusing Latin words were polished and put in order, he produced an epistle, indeed a fine little book, which I believe will accomplish many things in the future because it made known many things which were unknown.”¹⁰⁵ He then invited Bernard to use this resource and write a refutation against Islam. “It is your part and the part of all learned men to assail, destroy, trample under foot, with all zeal, word, and writing, every knowledge which raises itself above the

¹⁰⁰ Tolan gives a thorough summary of the *Summa totius Saracenorum* in Tolan, *Saracens in the Medieval European Imagination*, 155-158. Kritzeck describes Peter’s struggle to classify Islam a heresy or paganism, and concludes that Peter usually chose to call them heretics. See Kritzeck, 141-144.

¹⁰¹ ...ac denudatam ad nostrorum noticiam venire feci, ut quam spurca et friuola heresis esset sciretur, et aliquis Dei seruus, ad eam scripto refellendam, Sancto inflammante Spiritu incitaretur. Peter the Venerable, *Summa totius heresis saracenorum*, in Kritzeck, 211.

¹⁰² Bishko, 8.

¹⁰³ *Misi et nouam translationem nostram contra pessimam nequam Mahumet heresim disputantem*. Letter 111, Peter the Venerable, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable I*, ed. Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 294.

¹⁰⁴ See Burman, 77; Bishko, 8; Iogna-Prat, 339.

¹⁰⁵ *Qui uerba Latina impolite uel confuse plerumque ab eo prolata poliens et ordinans, epistolam immo libellum multis ut credo propter ignotarum rerum notitiam perutilem futurum perfecit*. Letter 111, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable I*, 294.

height of God.”¹⁰⁶ He was anxious for Bernard to agree so that “the Christian armory might acquire a worthy response against this heresy.”¹⁰⁷ Peter conceded that the conversion of Muslims might be too much to hope for. “Whereby it may not be possible to convert those who are lost, at least the weak in the Church, who are scandalized and moved by hidden reasons and light causes must not be neglected by a teacher who has zeal for justice.”¹⁰⁸

It would seem as if Bernard would have been the teacher with a zeal for justice willing to use the material provided by Peter to produce a worthy response to the Saracen heresy. At approximately the same time he received the request from Peter, Bernard wrote this in *Sermo 64, Super Cantica*:

Therefore, let us not think that it is a small act to conquer and refute a heretic, and suppress his heresies, laying bare a clear and open distinction from the deformed teachings that have an appearance of truth, and demonstrating the distortions by plain and irrefutable reasoning in such a way as to bring back into captivity a distorted intellect which exalts himself against the knowledge revealed by God.¹⁰⁹

However, there is no indication that Bernard ever replied to Peter’s request to refute the heresies of the Saracens. While it is possible that Bernard’s

¹⁰⁶ *Vestrum est et omnium doctorum uirorum omnem scientiam extollentem se aduersus altitudinem dei, omni studio, uerbo, et scripto impugnare, destruere conculcare.* Letter 111, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* I, 298. The translation of this phrase is from Gillian R. Knight, *The Correspondence between Peter the Venerable and Bernard of Clairvaux* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002), 149.

¹⁰⁷ *Si igitur reuerentiae uestrae in his laborandi deo aspirante uoluntas affuerit, nam facultas per eius gratium deesse non poterit, rescribite et mittemus librum quem nondum misimus, ut per os uestrum ipsius laude repletum, spiritui nequitiae spiritus benignus respondeat, et thesauros aecclesiae suae gazis uestrae sapientiae suppleat.* Letter 111, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* I, 298-299.

¹⁰⁸ *Quod si hinc errantes conuerti non possint, saltem infirmis aecclesiae, qui scandalizari uel occulte moueri leuibus etiam ex causis solent, consulere et prouidere doctus uel doctor si zelum habet iustitiae non debet negligere.* Letter 111, *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* I, 298.

¹⁰⁹ *Nec propterea sane nihil se egisse putet qui haereticum uicit et conuicit, haereses confutauit, uerisimilia a uero clare aperteque distinxit, praua dogmata, plana et irrefragabili ratione praua esse demonstrauit, prauum denique intellectum, extollentem se aduersus scientiam Dei, in captiuitatem redegit.* *Sermo 64, Super Cantica*, SBO II:170-171; *On the Song of Songs* III, 176. Perhaps Bernard wrote this sermon in response to an 1144 request from Eberwin, Provost of the Premonstratensians of Steinfeld, to refute the Cathar heresy. See Leclercq’s introduction to *On Song of Songs* IV, xii. Knight dates Peter the Venerable’s letter to Bernard as somewhere between late 1143 and early 1144. See Knight, 101.

response was not preserved, James Kritzek points out that even if there was a response, it must have been a refusal because Bernard never produced a refutation against Islam.¹¹⁰ Gillian Knight writes that the failure to respond to Peter's request is an indictment of Bernard for failing to direct his intellectual energies against the threat of Islam and preferring "involvement in the terrain of 'physical' warfare over that of 'spiritual' warfare as chosen by Peter himself."¹¹¹ Jean Leclercq is more sympathetic stating that Peter operated with some self-deception in his plan to invite the Muslims to salvation, while Bernard was simply being realistic to the current situation.¹¹² Benjamin Kedar adds that Bernard could only conceive of force as a viable mode of countering the Muslim threat to the Crusading Kingdom and implicitly ruled out attempts to Christianize them.¹¹³

The most reasonable explanation of Bernard's silence to Peter's request is that the Kingdom of Edessa fell to 'Imad ad-Din Zengi in 1144, the same year Bernard received Peter's letter. In 1145 Pope Eugenius II issued *Quantum praedecessores*, and in 1146 Bernard was busy promoting the Second Crusade. Peter's argument of combating Islam through debate and having Bernard provide a rational refutation of the Saracen heresy and an offensive weapon against it was now irrelevant. All that was important was the defense of Jerusalem, and in Bernard's mind this could only be done by force.

Bernard's crusade letters reflect his assessment of the Muslims. They are not heretics whose false doctrine threatens the minds of Christians, but pagan filth (*spurcitia paganorum*) who threaten Jerusalem. In his crusade letters to the Eastern French, Bavarians, and English, he wrote, "And now, to drive out our sins, the enemy of the cross has lifted up his sacrilegious head and ravages with the sword the blessed land, the land of promise."¹¹⁴ Bernard feared, "It is not far off, if no one is able to resist, they will rush into the city of the living God, and overturn the workshop of our redemp-

¹¹⁰ Kritzek, 45.

¹¹¹ Knight, 153.

¹¹² Jean Leclercq, "St. Bernard's Attitude toward War," in *Studies in Medieval Cistercian History II*, ed. John R. Sommerfeldt (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1976), 33-34.

¹¹³ Benjamin Z. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 60.

¹¹⁴ *Et nunc, peccatis nostris exigentibus, crucis adversarii caput extulerunt sacrilegum, depopulantes in ore gladii terram benedictam, terram promissionis. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:312; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 461.*

tion, and pollute the holy places, adorned by the blood of the immaculate Lamb."¹¹⁵ He wrote that they "gaze with sacrilegious eyes on the sanctuaries of the Christian religion, and will invade and endeavor to trample the couch on which our Life slept in death."¹¹⁶ The abbot observed that the wicked one (*malignus*) was enraged by Christians who obtained pardon for their sins through their pilgrimages to Jerusalem and now wishes to use Muslim warriors to put a halt to it. "He stirs up his vessels of injustice so that no signs or traces of piety will be left."¹¹⁷

Bernard began his crusade letter to Duke Wladislaus and his Bohemian subjects by warning that the Lord is losing his land that "he honored with his birth, made famous with his miracles, sanctified with his blood, enriched with his burial."¹¹⁸ This is the land where "he called men to a pure life, and the land where first appeared the flowers of his resurrection."¹¹⁹ The abbot continued, "This promised land evil men have begun to occupy and if none are found to resist, they will gaze at our religious shrines, and they will attempt to pollute the couch on which our life fell asleep in death, and profane the holy sanctuary dedicated to the royal blood of the Immaculate Lamb."¹²⁰ Bernard then demonstrated that he was familiar with Muslim theology, indicating that perhaps he did read Peter's letter and the accompanying *Risalat al-Kindi*. He asked the Bohemians to hear something more, something that the Muslims calculate to smite the hardest heart of any Christian. "They accuse our King of betrayal: he is accused

¹¹⁵ *Prope est, si non fuerit qui resistat, ut in ipsam Dei viventis irruant civitatem, ut officinas nostrae redemptionis evertant, ut polluant loca sancta, Agni immaculati purpurata cruore. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:312; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 461.*

¹¹⁶ *Ad ipsum, proh dolor, religionis christianae sacrarium inhiant ore sacrilego, lectumque ipsum invadere et conculcare conantur, in quo propter nos Vita nostra obdormivit in morte. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:312; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 461.*

¹¹⁷ *Excitat vasa iniquitatis suae, ne ulla quidem tantae pietatis signa aut vestigia relicturus. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:313; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 461.*

¹¹⁸ *Suam, quam honoravit nativitate sua, illustravit miraculis, dedicavit sanguine, sepultura ditavit. Epistola 458, SBO VIII:435; Letter 393, The Letters of St. Bernard, 465.*

¹¹⁹ *Suam, in qua primi apparuerunt flores resurrectionis. Epistola 458, SBO VIII:435; Letter 393, The Letters of St. Bernard, 465.*

¹²⁰ *Hanc repromissionis terram coeperunt occupare maligni, et nisi fuerit qui resistat, ad ipsum inhiant religionis nostrae sacrarium, lectumque ipsum maculare conantur, in quo propter nos vita nostra obdormivit in morte, et profanare sancta sanctorum, loca dico Agni immaculati purpurata cruore. Epistola 458, SBO VIII:435; Letter 392, The Letters of St. Bernard, 464.*

of pretending to be God when he was not.”¹²¹ This is the only instance in his writings where Bernard indicated an awareness that Muslims did not accept the divinity of Christ. The polemical way he presented it in this letter may indicate that he was relying on the *Risalat al-Kindi*, a work that served Christians as a guide to the teachings of Islam and how to zealously rebut them.¹²² Bernard then urged the Bohemians, “Let you who are faithful arise and defend their Lord against this disgraceful treason laid on him.”¹²³ The Cistercian abbot accused the Saracens of not only threatening to profane the city made holy by the Lord, but profane the Lord himself.

Bernard’s crusade letters show no interest in refuting the teachings of Islam, despite their attack of the divinity of Christ. His concern was the Saracen threat to Jerusalem. In his crusader letter to the eastern French, Bavarians, and English, he compared the Saracens to the Jews who lived in subjection to the Christians. Bernard wrote “If these people were similarly to exist in a boundary of subjection to us, then in my judgment we should wait for them rather than approach them with the sword.”¹²⁴ However, that was not the situation, leaving Bernard to conclude, “Now that they have begun to do violence to us, it is proper for those who do not carry the sword in vain to repel them.”¹²⁵

It is interesting to compare Bernard’s reaction to the Muslims with another target of the Second Crusade, the Wends. Saxon noblemen were hesitant to leave their homeland for the Holy Land because they were concerned about their eastern neighbors known as the Wends. The Wends retained their native polytheistic religion despite numerous attempts by

¹²¹ *Accusatur proditoris Rex noster: imponitur ei quod non sit Deus, sed falso simulaverit quod non erat. Epistola 458, SBO VIII:436; Letter 392, The Letters of St. Bernard, 464.*

¹²² Burman, 77.

¹²³ *Quis in vobis est fidelis eius, surgat, defendat Dominum suum ab impositae proditoris infamia. Epistola 458, SBO VIII:436; Letter 392, The Letters of St. Bernard, 464.*

¹²⁴ *Plane et gentiles, si essent similiter in fine futura subiugati, in eo quidem iudicio essent similiter expectandi quam gladiis appetendi. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:316; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 463.*

¹²⁵ *Nunc autem cum in nos esse coeperint violenti, oportet vim vi repellere eos, qui non sine causa gladium portant. Epistola 363, SBO VIII:317; Letter 391, The Letters of St. Bernard, 463.* Here I disagree with Jeremy Cohen who argues that Bernard understood the crusade as a pilgrimage that did not need to be directed toward the Holy Land. I maintain that Bernard understood the whole purpose of the Second Crusade as defending Jerusalem from Muslim attack. See Jeremy Cohen, “‘Witnesses of Our Redemption’—The Jews in the Crusading Theology of Bernard of Clairvaux,” in *Medieval Studies in Honour of Avrom Saltman*, ed. Bat-Sheva Albert et al. (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1995), 72.

the Church to convert them. The Saxons considered the Wends a threat to their lands and asked permission to broaden the crusade so they could deal with their pagan neighbors.¹²⁶ Bernard supported this effort and wrote that the people of God should “be furnished with the sign of the holy cross and armed against the enemies of the cross of Christ who are on the other side of the Albi.”¹²⁷ Bernard insisted that Christendom had endured these pagan people for too long. He wrote, “I prohibit for any reason that a treaty be made with them, neither for money nor for tribute, until, with the help of God, they go through the ritual of conversion or the race is wiped out.”¹²⁸ The Wends were either to be converted to Christianity or wiped out.

Bernard held out no such option for the Muslims. When he wrote to Peter the Venerable after the failure of the Second Crusade, the Cistercian abbot offered no words of encouragement for Peter’s project of assembling a theological armory with which to debate and perhaps convert the Saracens. Bernard instead urged Peter the Venerable to attend a meeting for the purpose of reviving the Second Crusade. Bernard began the letter by again sounding the alarm that the Lord was losing his land. “The hostile hand is driving onward to the great mountain of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.”¹²⁹ Bernard went on to describe how these places “consecrated by the blood and association of Christ” (*consecrata Christi sanguine et conversatione*), the foundation of our deliverance (*fundamenta salutis nostrae*), are being taken away from the Christian people. He lamented, “The princes’ hearts are less warm, they carry the sword without cause,

¹²⁶ See Phillips, 228–243.

¹²⁷ ...et eos contra hostes crucis Christi, qui sunt ultra Albi, signo sanctae crucis consignarent et armarent. *Epistola* 457, SBO VIII:433. Letter 394, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 467–468.

¹²⁸ *Illud enim omnimodis interdicimus, ne qua ratione ineant foedus cum eis, neque pro pecunia, neque pro tributo, donec, auxiliante Deo, aut ritus ipse, aut natio deleatur.* *Epistola* 457, SBO VIII:433; Letter 394, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 467. Phillips notes that theologians and historians are perplexed by Bernard’s obvious breach against the Biblical injunction against forced conversions. Phillips speculates that some of the Wends had reneged on previous conversions and thus could be killed as apostates. Another theory is that Bernard learned that the Wends had previously paid off Christian attackers and then underwent a token form of conversion. See Jonathan Phillips, *Holy Warriors: A Modern History of the Crusades* (New York, NY: Random House, 2009), 86.

¹²⁹ *Agitant manus suas inimici eius super montem filiae Sion, collem Ierusalem.* *Epistola* 521, SBO VIII:483; Letter 400, *The Letters of St. Bernard*, 472.

they put them back into a dead animal sheath, dedicated to rust. They will not uncover them with Christ suffering.”¹³⁰

Bernard's position on the Muslims was shaped solely by their threat to Jerusalem. The Muslim attack on Jerusalem was threatening the places on earth made holy by Christ, and, as a result, was also bringing suffering to Christ. Bernard was not interested in refuting the religion of Islam or converting Muslims to Christianity. “It is good that you go against the Ishmaelites,” Ephraim of Bonn recorded Bernard as telling the crusaders at Mainz.¹³¹ The abbot's intention was solely to defend Jerusalem from Muslim invasion.¹³²

An Eschatological Explanation

Bernard of Clairvaux's objective in vanquishing the haughty Muslims was to keep them out of Jerusalem. His concern that the subjected Jews might be spared from the crusaders was to keep alive the promise of their eventual conversion. It is significant to our understanding of Bernard to note that these motivating factors behind his position toward the Muslims and the Jews are ingredients in many medieval scenarios of the end of the world.

Bernard McGinn makes a compelling case that, while not central to his thought, Bernard took part in the re-emphasized historicizing eschatological movement of the twelfth century. McGinn points to Bernard's interest in the coming of the Antichrist, his original contribution to a four-fold division of history, and the possible influence of Sibylline literature on his attitude toward the Second Crusade.¹³³ Hans-Dietrich Kahl agrees that Bernard “must have more or less overtly embraced convictions that

¹³⁰ *Inteperunt corda principum; sine causa gladium portant; pellibus mortuorum animalium reconditus est, rubigini consecratus. Nec exerunt eum, cum Christus patiatur. Epistola 521, SBO VIII:483; Letter 400, The Letters of St. Bernard, 473.*

¹³¹ Ephraim of Bonn, 122.

¹³² Kedar notes that some participants of the Second Crusade believed that Bernard intended crusaders to convert the Saracens, although Bernard was never recorded as having expressed that intention. See Kedar, 66-67.

¹³³ Bernard McGinn, “St. Bernard and Eschatology,” in *Bernard of Clairvaux: Studies Presented to Dom Jean Leclercq* (Washington, DC: Cistercian Publications, 1973), 184-185. Brett Whalen gives a thorough treatment of the re-emphasized historicizing eschatological movement occurring in the twelfth century. However, Whalen does not mention Bernard playing much of a role in this movement. See Brett Edward Whalen, *Dominion of*

originated in the old so-called Sibylline prophecies.”¹³⁴ These so-called Sibylline prophecies were circulating in France at the beginning of the Second Crusade.¹³⁵ The influence of Sibylline literature on Bernard’s thinking about Jews and Muslims is particularly pertinent to our discussion. Two sources of the Sibylline prophecies merit our attention, the Tiburtine Sibyl and Pseudo-Methodius.¹³⁶

The Latin Tiburtine Sibyl, a late tenth or early eleventh century reworking of a fourth century Latin apocalyptic document, predicted a Last World Emperor who would appear prior to the end of the world.¹³⁷ The document mentioned other conditions that were to occur preceding the second coming of the Lord. One was the conversion of the Jews to the Lord after the one hundred and twenty year reign of the Last World Emperor.¹³⁸ Another was the Christian conquest of Jerusalem by this Last World Emperor, the King of the Romans, who would then hand his

God: Christendom and Apocalypse in the Middle Ages (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 72–99.

¹³⁴ Hans-Dietrich Kahl, “Crusade Eschatology as Seen by St. Bernard in the Years 1146 to 1148,” in *The Second Crusade and the Cistercians*, ed. Michael Gervers (New York, NY: St. Martin’s Press, 1992), 35. Raedts rejects the thesis that Bernard’s preaching of the Second Crusade had apocalyptic overtones or that crusading was an apocalyptic enterprise. See Raedts, 189.

¹³⁵ Schein, 153. In his *The Deeds of Frederick Barbarossa*, Otto of Freising, a twelfth century chronicler of the Second Crusade, wrote of prophecies found in the Sibylline books. See Otto of Freising, 26.

¹³⁶ Another popular recounting of the Sibylline prophecy of the Last Emperor legend was found in Adso’s *De ortu et tempore Antichristi*, which John Wright describes as being tremendously influential in the Middle Ages. See John Wright, *The Play of the Antichrist* (Toronto, ON: The Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1967), 100. Adso wrote of the Jews rushing to accept the Antichrist prior to the Last Day. *Nam sicut supra diximus, in civitate Babilonie natus Ierosolimam veniens circucidet se dicens Iudeis: “Ego sum Christus vobis repromissus, qui ad salutem vestram veni, ut vos, qui dispersi estis, congregum et defendam.” Tunc confluent ad eum omnes Iudei existimantes deum suscipere, sed suscipient diabolum.* See Ernst Sackur, *Sybyllinische Texte und Forschungen* (Halle: Niemeyer, 1898; repr., Elibron Classics, 2006), 111; Wright, 107. Adso’s scenario on the fate of the Jews does not correspond with Bernard’s insistence of the final conversion of the Jews. Therefore, one can conclude that Bernard either was not aware of Adso’s writing, or he rejected the portion concerning the Jews.

¹³⁷ Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1979), 43–50.

¹³⁸ *Qui vero cruce Iesu Christi non adoraverit gladio punietur, et cum completi fuerint centum et viginti anni, Iudei convertentur ad Dominum, et erit ab omnibus sepulcrum eius gloriosum.* *Die Tiburtinische Sibylle*, Sackur, 185.

kingdom over to God the Father and Jesus Christ his Son.¹³⁹ As has been demonstrated in this paper, these two conditions were guiding principles for Bernard in his dealings with the Jews and the Muslims.

Pseudo-Methodius was a seventh century retelling of the Last World Emperor myth that was originally written in Syriac. It was soon translated into Greek where it received wide circulation among the Eastern Churches, and in the eighth century was translated into Latin.¹⁴⁰ Pseudo-Methodius shifted the target of the Last Emperor's warfare from pagans, as found in the Tiburtine Sibyl, to the sons of Ishmael.¹⁴¹ "And indeed the sons of Ishmael will be handed over this power by God and possess the land of the Christians, not because they were singled out by the Lord God, but because of the sins and iniquities committed by them [the Christians]."¹⁴² Pseudo-Methodius went on to describe how the King of the Greeks, or Romans, will come out against the sons of Ishmael, going into their homeland and bringing desolation with the sword, capturing their women and children, cutting them off from the lands of their fathers.¹⁴³ "By the sword they will be delivered to the hand of the king of the Romans, into captivity and death and corruption."¹⁴⁴ Pseudo-Methodius wrote that after the sons of

¹³⁹ *Cum autem audierit rex Romanorum, convocato exercitu debellabit eos atque prosternet usque ad internicionem et postea veniet Ierusalem et ibi deposito capitis diademate et omni habitu regali relinquet regnum christianorum Deo patri et Iesu Christo filio eius. Die Tiburtinische Sibylle*, Sackur, 186.

¹⁴⁰ McGinn, 72-73. McGinn comments that Pseudo-Methodius was of paramount importance in the Christian confrontation with Islam in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Paul Alexander gives a detailed account of the origins of Pseudo-Methodius and its translation into the Greek. See Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1985), 13-60.

¹⁴¹ Alexander, 136.

¹⁴² *Sic etenim filios Ismahel, non quod eos diligit dominus Deus, dabit eis potentiam hanc, ut obteneant terram christianorum, sed propter peccatum et iniquitatem, quae ab eis committitur.* Pseudo-Methodius, *Die Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius: Die ältesten Griechischen Und Lateinischen Übersetzungen*, eds W. J. Aerts and G. A. A. Kortekaas (Leuven: Peeters, 1998), 139-141.

¹⁴³ *Tunc subito insurgent super eos tribulatio et angustia, et exiliet super eos rex Gregorum, sive Romanorum, in furore magne et expergiscitur tamquam homo a somno vini, quem exaestimabant homines tamquam mortuum esse et in nihilo utilem proficisse. Hic exiet super eos a mare Aethiopiae et mittit gladium et desolationem in Ethribum, que est eorum patria, et captivabit mulieres eorum et filios illorum. Super habitantes autem terram promissiones discendent filii regis in gladio et concidunt eos a terra.* Pseudo-Methodius, 175.

¹⁴⁴ *... in manus regis Romanorum tradentur in gladio et captivitatem et morte et corruptionem.* Pseudo-Methodius, 177.

Ishmael had been defeated, “the king of the Romans will go down and be detained in Jerusalem.”¹⁴⁵ The fate of the sons of Ishmael found in Pseudo-Methodius was certainly reflected in Bernard’s silence to Peter the Venerable’s request to write a response to the Saracen heresy and instead promote the use of the sword against them.

The Sibylline prophecy of the Last World Emperor was neither officially accepted nor condemned by the Church. Adapting it in one form or another in order to make sense of the Muslim threat or ascertain the time of the end of the world was widely done.¹⁴⁶ Jean Flori reasons it was quite possible that, in the case of the Second Crusade, Bernard separated from the more intellectual position reflected in the majority of his work and adopted an attitude more apocalyptic. He points to Bernard’s recruitment of Conrad to be a leader of the crusade as reflecting the Sibylline prophecies. Flori adds that Bernard felt free to discard these Sibylline prophecies when they were not accomplished in the Second Crusade, and return to a more traditional approach to the crusade.¹⁴⁷ Bernard also would have felt free to utilize the final conversion of the Jews found in the Tiburtine Sibyl, and the divine sanctions of the destruction of the son of Ishmael found in Pseudo-Methodius, to shape his position on the Jews and Muslims.

Michael Casey cautions about making too much out of Bernard’s dabbling in eschatology. Casey makes the point that “Bernard was more interested in the qualitative difference between the present and the future than in measuring the quantitative distance between them.”¹⁴⁸ However, Casey does concede that any borrowing Bernard might have done from the

¹⁴⁵ *Et post haec descendit rex Romanorum et demorabitur in Hierusalem septimana temporum et dimedia*. Pseudo-Methodius, 185.

¹⁴⁶ Whalen, 39-40. Gabriele shows how the Last Emperor Legend led to violence against pagans, Jews, Muslims, and heretics, each of whom were, at various times, considered to be the Antichrist, enemies of Christ who were to be fought against in preparation for the end of the world. See Gabriele, 63-64. Giles Constable writes that there were those who saw the Second Crusade as the fulfillment of Sibylline prophecies. See Giles Constable, “The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries,” *Traditio* IX (1953): 272.

¹⁴⁷ Jean Flori, *L'Islam et la Fin des Temps: L'interprétation prophétique des invasions musulmanes dans le christianisme médiéval* (Paris: Seuil, 2007), 287-288. Flori’s mention of Conrad is in reference to Kaul’s theory that Bernard recruited Conrad III of Germany as a leader of the Second Crusade to fulfill the condition found in the Tiburtine Sibyl that the initial name of the Last World Emperor would begin with the letter “C”. See Kaul, 35-36.

¹⁴⁸ Michael Casey, *Athirst for God: Spiritual Desire in Bernard of Clairvaux’s Sermons on the Song of Songs* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1988), 242.

twelfth century currents of eschatological thought would have been to serve his own spiritual and monastic purposes.¹⁴⁹ Would Bernard's concern for the eschatological themes of protecting the Christian Kingdom of Jerusalem from a threatened Muslim invasion and keeping alive the possibility of the conversion of the Jews prior to the end of the world have served his spiritual and monastic interests?

Bernard's great spiritual desire was union with God. Étienne Gilson describes the culmination of this union as "a translucid mirror in which God now sees nought but Himself, and in which the soul now sees nought but God."¹⁵⁰ Bernard described his desire for God in *Sermo 67, Super Cantica*. He began this sermon by explaining that his previous sermons have pondered the words of the bridegroom, but now he wishes to examine the words of the bride, specifically "my beloved is mine, and I am his."¹⁵¹ Bernard compared these words to a belch. "They break forth from out of the innermost, without your will or knowledge, extracted from you rather than sent forth."¹⁵² The abbot interpreted the words of the bride as expressing in a spontaneous way the desire of a righteous person for God. However, it was not a desire that would be fulfilled in the present life. Bernard wrote, "He wishes me to endure for righteousness and wait for my reward in the future, not to receive it in the present, for the reward of righteousness is salvation, not in this age, but being with God."¹⁵³ Bernard was convinced that the spiritual union with God that he desired would not be found in this life, nor would it be found immediately after death, but only on the Last Day at the general resurrection of the dead.

Casey observes that "when Bernard affirmed the traditional faith in the future life, he did so with the clear understanding that the ultimate stage in the process was the resurrection of the dead."¹⁵⁴ Bernard explained in his

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Étienne Gilson, *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*, trans. A. H. C. Dowles (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1990), 152.

¹⁵¹ *Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi. Sermo 67, Super Cantica*, SBO II:188; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 4. The text is Song of Songs 2:16.

¹⁵² *Per se ex intimis, non modo cum non vis, sed et cum nescis, erumpit, evulsus potius quam emissus. Sermo 67, Super Cantica*, SBO II:191, *On the Song of Songs* IV, 8.

¹⁵³ *Patientem pro iustitia vult me expectare mercedem in posterum, non recipere in praesenti, quod iustitiae merces, salutare, non saeculi, sed Domini sit. Sermo 67, Super Cantica*, SBO II: 191-192; *On the Song of Songs* IV, 9.

¹⁵⁴ Casey, 234-235.

treatise, *De diligendo Deo*, that the soul could not realize union with God until the final resurrection of the body.

Therefore, until death is swallowed up in victory, and everlasting light invades on all sides and always escapes the limits of night to the extent that heavenly glory shines in the bodies, it is not possible for souls to disembark wholly out of themselves and cross over into God; without doubt they are bound to their bodies, if not by life and feeling, certainly by natural affection; thus they do not wish and are not able to have the consummation away from them . . . The sick, dead, and resurrected body is good for the soul who is faithful to God: first for the delights of penance, second for rest, and finally for consummation.¹⁵⁵

Bernard described the journey to union with God as a triple banquet. “Eat before death, drink after death, be inebriated after the resurrection.”¹⁵⁶ It is in this third state that the soul (bride) will be intoxicated by Christ’s (bridegroom’s) most passionate, yet most chaste embrace. “Here is abundance without nausea; here is insatiable curiosity without restlessness; here is that eternal, inexplicable desire knowing no want; here, at last, is that sober inebriation, truth, not gorged with unmixed wine, not dripping with wine, but on fire for God.”¹⁵⁷

Bernard indicated in his *Sermo 2, Festivitate Ominium Sanctorum*, that the souls of the saints had not yet experienced their union with God and were becoming frustrated waiting for the Last Day. “The souls of the saints are admitted to rest apart from their bodies, but not to the full glory of the kingdom . . . And the divine voice says to the souls of the saints who urgently demand the resurrection of their bodies, bear up for a moderate amount of

¹⁵⁵ *Donec ergo absorpta sit mors in victoria, et noctis undique terminos lux perennis invadet et occupet usquequaque, quatenus et in corporibus gloria caelestis effulgeat, non possunt ex toto animae seipsas exponere et transire in Deum, nimirum ligatae corporibus etiam tunc, etsi non vita vel sensu, certe affectu naturali, ita ut absque his nec velint, nec valeant consummari. . . . Valet Deum diligenti animae corpus suum infirmum, valet et mortuum, valet et resuscitatum: primo quidem ad fructum paenitentiae, secundo ad requiem, postremo ad consummationem.* SBO III:144–145; Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Loving God*, trans. Emero Stiegman (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1995), 32.

¹⁵⁶ *Comedite ante mortem, bibite post mortem, inebriamini post resurrectionem.* SBO III:147; *On Loving God*, 34.

¹⁵⁷ *Hinc illa satietas sine fastidio; hinc insatiabilis illa sine inquietudine curiositas; hinc aeternum illud atque inexplebile desiderium, nesciens egestatem; hinc denique sobria illa ebrietas, vero, non mero ingurgitans, non madens vino, sed ardens Deo.* SBO III:147; *On Loving God*, 35.

time until the number of your brothers is filled up.”¹⁵⁸ In his *Sermo 3, Festivitate Ominium Sanctorum*, the abbot pronounced when the soul would finally reach the glory of the presence of God.

Direct your attention, unless I am mistaken, to what was said in the preceding sermon, there are to be three states of the souls of the saints: first namely in the corruptible body, second without the body, third in the glorified body; first in military service, second in rest, third in the happiness of consummation; finally, first in the tents, second in the courts, third in the house of God.¹⁵⁹

It was only at the resurrection on the Last Day that Bernard believed the sanctified soul would experience true union with God. He wrote in *Sermo 16, In Psalmum, “Qui Habitat,”* “Truly glorification waits for the Last Day, the Day of Resurrection, when what is sown for the moment in disgrace will rise in glory.”¹⁶⁰

Roch Kereszty writes that Bernard taught that a person’s affections can be fully directed to God only after the resurrection and glorification of the body.¹⁶¹ McGinn points out that Bernard insisted “that our enjoyment of bliss will not be complete until our bodies are reunited with our souls at the general resurrection.”¹⁶² This being the case, Bernard would have had

¹⁵⁸ *Ad requiem enim exutae a corporibus animae sanctae protinus admittuntur; ad plenam autem gloriam regni non ita... Et vox divina ad animas sanctas corporum suorum resurrectionem flagitantes: Sustinete modicum tempus, donec impleatur numerus fratrum vestrorum. Sermo 2, Festivitate Ominium Sanctorum, SBO V:348.*

¹⁵⁹ *Advertitis, nisi fallor, ex his quae praecedente sermone sunt dicta, tres esse sanctarum status animarum: primum videlicet in corpore corruptibili, secundum sine corpore, tertiam in corpore iam glorificato; primum militia, secundum in requie, tertium in beatitudine consummata; primum denique in tabernaculis, secundum in atriis, tertium in domo Dei. Sermo 3, Festivitate Ominium Sanctorum, SBO V:349.*

¹⁶⁰ *Sane glorificatio diem ultimum manet, diem resurrectionis, quando surget in gloria, quod in ignominia interim seminatur. SBO IV:482-483; Sermons on Conversion, 248.* Bernard’s twelfth century contemporary Hildegard of Bingen held a similar belief. Beverly Mayne Kienzle writes that Hildegard was of the opinion “that humans receive spiritual bodies at the Resurrection, and that the spiritual body, united inseparably to the soul, will regard the face of God eternally.” See Beverly Mayne Kienzle, “Constructing Heaven in Hildegard of Bingen’s *Expositiones euangeliorum*,” in *Envisaging Heaven in the Middle Ages*, eds Carolyn Muessig and Ad Putter (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 39.

¹⁶¹ Roch Kereszty, “Relationship between Anthropology and Christology—St. Bernard, A Teacher for Our Age,” *Analecta Cisterciensia* 46 (1990): 293-294.

¹⁶² Bernard McGinn, “Freedom, Formation, and Reformation: The Anthropological Roots of St. Bernard’s Spiritual Teaching,” *Analecta Cisterciensia* 46 (1990): 98-99.

ample reason to not only have been interested in the eschatological thinking of his day, he would have had reason to pursue apocalyptic goals for his own spiritual purpose. Perhaps it was these eschatological considerations, coupled with his own spiritual desires, which shaped Bernard's dealings with the Muslims and the Jews. Vanquishing the haughty Muslims who threatened Jerusalem and sparing the subjected Jews until the time of their conversion may simply have been a policy Bernard pursued in order to hasten the day when he might enjoy the bliss of union with God.

Conclusion

Kenneth Stow points out that by the eleventh century, the Church saw the Muslims, not the Jews, as their real enemies. As an example, Stow cites Pope Alexander II's 1063 comment that warfare against the Saracens is justified because they persecute Christians, while the Jews are to be protected because they are universally ready to be subservient.¹⁶³ Bernard of Clairvaux followed this position in his instructions to crusaders to vanquish the haughty Muslims who were threatening Jerusalem, and to spare the Jews who were subjected to Christian authority. However, the evidence indicates that Bernard was interested in more than enforcing Church policy concerning Muslims and Jews. His concern to defend the physical city of Jerusalem, even though he encouraged prospective crusaders to come to the spiritual Jerusalem at Clairvaux, and his eagerness to protect the Jews until their predestined final conversion to Christianity speak of an eschatological purpose.¹⁶⁴ He even wrote that Christ would return to Jerusalem when the Muslim threat to Jerusalem was defeated. "Once they have

¹⁶³ Kenneth R. Stow, "Hatred of the Jews or Love of the Church: Papal Policy toward Jews in the Middle Ages," in *Antisemitism through the Ages*, ed. Shmuel Almog (New York, NY: Pergamon Press, 1988), 77. Pope Alexander II's comment came in a letter congratulating the bishops of Spain in their efforts to prevent Jewish bloodshed during an offensive against Spanish Muslims.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Chazan argues that millenarian enthusiasm on the part of German crusaders fueled the exterminatory assaults on Rhineland Jews in 1096. However, Chazan does not believe that millenarian enthusiasm played a role in the anti-Jewish violence during the Second Crusade. See Robert Chazan, "'Let Not a Remnant or a Residue Escape': Millenarian Enthusiasm in the First Crusade," *Speculum* 84 (2009): 312. My thesis is that Bernard's eschatological hope was behind his opposition to the anti-Jewish violence, as well as his defense of Jerusalem from Muslim attack.

been expelled, he will return to his heritage and his house.”¹⁶⁵ This purpose is not surprising if one accepts the fact that Bernard believed his longing for union with God could not be consummated until the general resurrection of the dead on the Last Day. Perhaps the Cistercian abbot’s position on the Muslims and Jews was primarily influenced by his own mystical desires.

¹⁶⁵ *Quibus expulsis revertetur ipse in hereditatem domumque suam*. SBO III:218; *In Praise of the New Knighthood*, 41.

Copyright of Medieval Encounters is the property of Brill Academic Publishers and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.